

Message Text

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ACTION EA-14

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C O N F I D E N T I A L SAIGON 6253

E. O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: MOPS PINT PINS VS

SUBJECT: TWO- PARTY JOINT MILITARY COMMISSION DEVELOPMENTS

CINCPAC FOR POLAD

REF: A. STATE 067934

B. SAIGON 5888

C. STATE 063076

SUMMARY. IN REVIEW OF CURRENT TWO- PARTY JOINT MILITARY COMMISSION APR 12, LTG THUAN (CHIEF OF GVN DEL) DISCUSSED THE SITUATION AT TONG LE CHAN, INCLUDING MEETING OF COMMANDERS OF OPPOSING ARMED FORCES, PRISONERS OF WAR AND CIVILIAN DETAINEES, AND COMMUNIST PERSONALITIES. END SUMMARY.

1. IN REVIEW OF CURRENT TWO- PARTY JOINT MILITARY COMMISSION DEVELOPMENTS WITH EMBASSY APR 12, LTG PHAM QUOC THUAN, HEAD OF GVN DELEGATION TO TPJMC, MADE FOLLOWING PRINCIPAL POINTS:

2. TONG LE CHAN. CONTINUING COMMUNISTSETBACKS ON TONG LE CHAN STILL DOMINATE DISCUSSIONS AT MEETING OF CHIEFS OF DELEGATION OF TPJMC. GVN EFFORTS TO ARRANGE LOCAL CEASEFIRE HAVE BEEN MET BY CONTINUING CALLS BY PRG DELEGATION FOR MEETING OF LOCAL COMMANDERS (REF A).

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THUAN SEES NO PROSPECT FOR LOCAL CEASEFIRE OTHER THAN EVENTUAL COMPROMISE AGREEMENT WITH PRG ON THIS ISSUE.

3. GENERAL THUAN REVIEWED AT SOME LENGTH GVN VIEW OF MEANING OF QUOTE COMMANDERS OF THE OPPOSING ARMED FORCES END QUOTE AS MENTIONED IN ARTICLE 4 OF PROTOCOL ON CEASEFIRE. HE EXPANDED ON VIEWS PREVIOUSLY EXPRESSED TO EMBASSY BY COL. DUONG HIEU NGHIA, OF GVN DELEGATION TO TPJMC (PARA 3, REF B). HE NOTED THAT AT TPJMC MEETING APRIL 10 HE HAD PROPOSED TO PRG SIDE THAT LOCAL COMMANDERS MEET TOGETHER WITH COLONEL FROM EACH SIDE OF TPJMC. HIEN STATEMENT REPORTED REF A APPARENTLY IN ERROR. (THUAN MADE CLEAR THAT THIS PROPOSAL WAS PRESENTED, BASED ON TALKING PAPER AMBASSADOR WHITEHOUSE LEFT WITH PRIME MINISTER KHIEM IN ACCORDANCE WITH REF C). LOCAL COMMANDERS, ACCORDING TO GVN PROPOSAL, WERE TO DISCUSS MEDICAL EVACUATION OF WOUNDED AND RESUPPLY WHILE COLONELS DISCUSS LONG RANGE PROBLEMS. HOWEVER, PRG REJECTED THIS FORMULATION, AS IT HAS ALL ALTERNATIVES TO MEETINGS OF OPPOSING LOCAL COMMANDERS WITH NO OTHER PERSONS PRESENT. GENERAL THUAN POINTED OUT THAT GVN COMMANDER AT TONG LE CHAN IS RECENTLY- APPOINTED MAJOR, WHILE COMMANDER OF COMMUNIST BESIEGING FORCES OF DIVISION SIZE WOULD BE GENERAL OFFICER.

4. FURTHER DEVELOPING THEME THAT ISSUE OF IDENTITY OF COMMANDERS OF THE OPPOSING ARMED FORCES MUST BE DEFINED MORE CAREFULLY THAN IN WHAT HE TERMED GENERAL LANGUAGE OF ARTICLE 4, THUAN POINTED OUT THAT IN CURRENT FIGHTING NEAR HONG NGU (ON MEKONG NEAR CAMBODIAN BORDER) THREE NVA REGIMENTS ARE FACING THREE GVN BATTALIONS. HE ASKED WHO ARE THE COMMANDERS OF THE OPPOSING ARMED FORCES, AND ANSWERED BY SAYING THOSE IN OVERALL COMMAND OF LMEAL AREA OF COMBAT, RATHER THAN INDIVIDUAL BATTALION COMMANDERS. HE SAID PRG PURPOSE IN PRESSING FOR LOW- LEVEL COMMANDERS' MEETINGS IS TO TAKE ADVANTAGE OF SUPERIOR POLITICAL INDOCTRINATION OF
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